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ABSTRACT

The past 40 years have witnessed changes in the characteristics, training, and social setting of the school superintendent. A 1939 survey showed that superintendents tended to be male, white, married, Protestant, upwardly-mobile, Republican, and from non-urban backgrounds. Most held masters' or baccalaureate degrees. A 1974 survey of Wisconsin superintendents indicates these characteristics remain much the same, although more superintendents now have masters' degrees. Administrative training for educators expanded greatly after World War II because of new federal and private funding and the proliferation of public and private educational administration. By the 1960s, the oversupply of qualified administrators had led to a decline in the economic return to superintendents from their training and to an increase in subordinate administrative positions. While administrative training has become more theoretical, educational administration researchers and theoreticians have tended not to become superintendents. In the last 40 years superintendents have also had to adjust to four major social changes, including increased family mobility, desegregation and its controversies, renewed conflict between science and religion, and teacher unionism. Further, school business management has become more professional and school boards more democratic. State legislatures, however, have reduced school boards' policy-making powers. (RW)

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EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION: A FORTY-YEAR PERSPECTIVE

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BY

H. THOMAS JAMES
PRESIDENT, THE SPENCER FOUNDATION

WHEN YOU INVITED ME TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FORTY YEARS, I DECIDED TO CONCENTRATE MY REMARKS ON THE ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT. THIS IS A SUBJECT THAT HAS INTERESTED ME DEEPLY THROUGHOUT MY ENTIRE CAREER IN THE WORLD OF EDUCATION--FIRST AS A TEACHER, PRINCIPAL, CITY SUPERINTENDENT, AND ASSISTANT STATE SUPERINTENDENT IN WISCONSIN, LATER AS A PROFESSOR AND TEACHER OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS AT CHICAGO AND STANFORD, AND FINALLY AS A FOUNDATION PRESIDENT DISPENSING FUNDS FOR RESEARCH INTO THE PROCESSES OF EDUCATION. WHILE IN THE STATE OFFICE I BEGAN AND SUBSEQUENTLY BROUGHT UP-TO-DATE A DETAILED RECORD OF VACANCY CHAINS IN WISCONSIN SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND CAREERS OF WISCONSIN SUPERINTENDENTS.[1]

IN TALKING TO YOU ABOUT THE ROLE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS I WILL FOCUS MY COMMENTS ON SOME OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE OCCUPIED THE POSITION, SOME OF THE RESEARCH AND TRAINING PROGRAMS INTENDED TO IMPROVE THE INCUMBENTS, AND SOME CHANGES IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL MILIEU IN WHICH THE SUPERINTENDENT FUNCTIONS.

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[1] THESE DATA WERE THEN ANALYZED BY JAMES G. MARCH AND JAMES G. MARCH AND THE RESULTS REPORTED IN "ALMOST RANDOM CAREERS: THE WISCONSIN SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENCY, 1940-1972," ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE QUARTERLY, SEPTEMBER 1977, PP. 377-408.

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SOME MAY THINK THAT FORTY YEARS IS TOO SHORT A PERSPECTIVE IN WHICH TO VIEW A PROFESSION SCARCELY MORE THAN TWICE THAT OLD. (BUFFALO, NEW YORK, SEEMS TO HAVE HAD THE FIRST SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT ON RECORD IN 1837, AND BY 1870 ONLY TWENTY-FIVE MORE CITIES HAD CREATED THE OFFICE.)[2] BUT FORTY YEARS IS MY PERSPECTIVE, AND FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE, THE ONLY ONE WITHIN WHICH I CAN GO BEYOND WHAT WE HAVE ALL READ AS GRADUATE STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROFESSION.

I REACHED MY MAJORITY IN THE MIDST OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION OF THE 1930S, AND PSYCHOLOGISTS AND HISTORIANS ALIKE HAVE ARGUED THAT MY GENERATION HAS A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE ON FACTORS RELATED TO STABILITY AND CHANGE THAN ANY THAT FOLLOWED US. THAT CATACLYSMIC EVENT AFFECTED ALSO THE ORGANIZATIONS AND STRUCTURES BY WHICH SUPERINTENDENTS WERE SHAPED AND IN WHICH THEY FUNCTIONED. IT ALSO LED TO SHIFTS IN SOCIETAL AIMS AND TO SOME RESHAPING OF THE SOCIAL PROCESSES THAT AFFECTED THEM.

TOWARD THE END OF THAT DECADE OF VERY HARD TIMES I WAS AMONG THAT SMALL, VERY LUCKY MINORITY IN MY POPULATION COHORT WHO HAD COMPLETED COLLEGE AND, EVEN MORE FORTUNATELY, HAD MANAGED TO GET A MASTER'S DEGREE IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION. TO HAVE THE MASTER'S DEGREE BEFORE STARTING TO TEACH WAS ALMOST UNHEARD OF IN THOSE DAYS, FOR THOSE FEW SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS OF THE TIME WHO ASPIRED TO THE MASTER'S DEGREE USUALLY GAVE UP SUMMER VACATIONS FOR YEARS TO PURSUE IT. ....

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[2] ARTHUR HENRY CHAMBERLAIN, THE GROWTH OF RESPONSIBILITY AND ENLARGEMENT OF POWER OF THE CITY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT. (BERKELEY: UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS, 1913), PP. 374-76.

In 1939 that degree virtually guaranteed me a position in school administration as soon as I had finished three years of teaching. My advisor in the master's program, a graduate of Teachers College, Columbia University, and one of the local "barons" often mentioned in the literature, made that assurance doubly sure. He called a superintendent, formerly his student in the master's program, told him I was heading for administration, and suggested that he find me a job and get me started right. After three years in the classroom, as the age of twenty-six, I received my first appointment as a supervising principal, a title in Wisconsin given to the chief administrative officer of a small school district with grades K through 12. While retrospection is tricky, as historians know, and I have probably given undue weight to personal factors in bringing about that event, I am perfectly sure that possessing the master's degree was important. Most important of all, however, was the fact that in the buildup of manpower for World War II the pool of candidates for these positions was being depleted as rapidly as all other pools of manpower. After only a year in the new job, I, too, was off to war, and my successor was a retired barber who hadn't had a school job for fourteen years, with neither a master's degree nor a "baron" to speak for him.

By 1939 the predominant characteristics of the superintendent were well established in the literature: male, white, married,

UPWARDLY MOBILE, PROTESTANT, NATIVE-BORN, GENERALLY FROM FARMING AREAS AND SMALL TOWNS (CHARACTERISTICS STILL EVIDENT AMONG PRACTICING SUPERINTENDENTS, IT MAY BE SAID). A SURVEY IN THAT YEAR[3] SHOWED THAT MOST STATES WERE SHOWING OFFICIAL CONCERN WITH THE EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS. FORTY STATES REQUIRED THAT THEY HOLD A BACHELOR'S DEGREE, AND THIRTY-TWO REQUIRED THEM TO HAVE HAD PRIOR EXPERIENCE AS A TEACHER, USUALLY THREE YEARS. ONLY NINETEEN STATES AT THAT TIME REQUIRED THE COMPLETION OF GRADUATE COURSES.

ONE MIGHT ADD TO THOSE CHARACTERISTICS, AS DAVID TYACK HAS DONE. "TYPICALLY, THEY HAD LONG EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATION, BEGINNING THEIR CAREERS AS YOUNG TEACHERS, GOING ON TO PRINCIPALSHIPS, AND THEN BECOMING SUPERINTENDENTS (IN LARGER COMMUNITIES THEY OFTEN BECAME ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS ALONG THE WAY). IN DISPROPORTIONATE PERCENTAGES THEY HAVE BEEN OLDER SONS IN LARGER THAN AVERAGE FAMILIES. MOSTLY THEY REMAINED IN THE SAME STATES FOR THEIR ENTIRE CAREERS AS SUPERINTENDENTS. THEY HAVE BEEN JOINERS, PARTICIPATING ACTIVELY IN CIVIC AND PROFESSIONAL GROUPS. MOST OF THEM PICKED UP THEIR ADVANCED EDUCATION WHILE THEY PRACTICED THEIR PROFESSION, WITH LONG GAPS OF TIME BETWEEN THEIR ACADEMIC DEGREES. THEY HAVE BEEN DISPROPORTIONATELY REPUBLICAN AND HAVE GENERALLY BEEN MODERATE TO CONSERVATIVE IN THEIR SOCIAL PHILOSOPHIES."[4]

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[3]ROBERT C. WOELLNER AND M. AURILLA WOOD, REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION OF TEACHERS, COUNSELORS, LIBRARIANS, AND ADMINISTRATORS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS AND JUNIOR COLLEGES, 1939 EDITION (CHICAGO: UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1939).

[4]DAVID B. TYACK, "PILGRIM'S PROGRESS: TOWARD A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENCY, 1860-1960," HISTORY OF EDUCATION QUARTERLY (FALL 1976), P. 264.

I WOULD ADD A BRIEF FOOTNOTE TO TYACK'S DESCRIPTION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT AS "JOINER." I CANNOT CITE APPROPRIATE RESEARCH TO SUPPORT THE NOTION, BUT I BELIEVE IT COULD BE ESTABLISHED THAT RICH SOCIAL NETWORKS ARE A STABILIZING FACTOR IN THE SUPERINTENDENCY. HERBERT A. THELEN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO DEVELOPED AN ELEGANT RESEARCH-BASED CONCEPT IN THE LATE 1950s WHICH HE CALLED THE INVISIBLE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE OF SCHOOL BOARDS. IN A FILM THAT HE BUILT AROUND THE CONCEPT HE SHOWED SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS SEATED AT WORK, AND PROJECTED SEQUENTIALLY ABOVE EACH MEMBER'S HEAD APPEARED THE "INVISIBLE COMMITTEE" OF HIS FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS EXPRESSING THEIR FEELINGS AND VIEWPOINTS ON THE ISSUES BEING CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD. THE SUPERINTENDENT WHO IS WELL-CONNECTED IN THESE NETWORKS AVOIDS SURPRISES, AND INCREASES HIS UNDERSTANDING OF THE BEHAVIOR OF INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBERS AS THEY WORK TOGETHER. IN OUR SCHOOL BOARD STUDIES AT STANFORD IN THE MID-SIXTIES WE NOTED HIERARCHIES OF SUCH NETWORKS. THUS THE SCHOOL BOARD NETWORK IS RELATED WITHIN THE HIERARCHY TO THE NETWORKS OF OTHER VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS, AND THE POWER TO BE DRAWN FROM THE NETWORK INCREASES AS THE INDIVIDUAL MOVES UPWARD TO SUCH A CAPSTONE AS THE OPERA BOARD. THERE IS A CAVEAT, HOWEVER, FOR THE SUPERINTENDENT WHO BECOMES TOO INTERESTED AND WELL CONNECTED TOWARD THE TOP OF THE HIERARCHY: JUST AS THINGS SEEM TO BE GOING SMOOTHLY, A NEW BOARD MEMBER MAY BE VOTED IN BY A CONSTITUENCY BASED IN A NEIGHBORHOOD BAR.

TYACK EMPHASIZES THE MALENESS, WHICH IS ALSO CONFIRMED IN THE WISCONSIN DATA; BETWEEN 1939 AND 1974 WE FOUND ONLY THREE

WOMEN. TYACK OFFERS AN EXPLANATION: "THE VERY AMBIGUITY AND DIFFUSENESS OF THE GOALS OF SCHOOLING, AND THE CONSEQUENT DIFFICULTY OF MEASURING 'SUCCESS' OR 'FAILURE,' PROBABLY REINFORCED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MALENESS, MATURE AGE, 'PROPER' ETHNICITY, ACCEPTABLE CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, AND APPEARANCE (NOT SURPRISINGLY, SUPERINTENDENTS WERE TALLER THAN THE AVERAGE, GIVING PEOPLE SOMEONE TO LOOK UP TO). FOR A SUPERINTENDENT TO BE A MEMBER OF A RESPECTABLE CHURCH AND TO HAVE A STABLE MARRIAGE GAVE MORAL CERTIFICATION, A COMFORTING SIGN OF REPUTABILITY. LIKE THE BANKER'S CONSERVATIVE DRESS, SUCH SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS WERE AN OUTWARD SIGN OF SAFE LEADERSHIP IN AN AMBIGUOUS ENTERPRISE."[5] ONE WONDERS IF THE CURRENT WAVE OF INTEREST IN CALLING WOMEN TO THE SUPERINTENDENCY CAN CHANGE THAT PATTERN. THOSE OF US FROM CHICAGO WHO SEE RUTH LOVE MOVING WITH GRACE AND GOOD SENSE INTO THE DIFFICULT CHICAGO SUPERINTENDENCY HOPE THAT IT MAY.

TYACK IDENTIFIES ANOTHER CHARACTERISTIC THAT IS STILL QUITE PERVASIVE AMONG PRACTICING ADMINISTRATORS: THEY TEND TO BE OPTIMISTS, SECURE IN THE NOTION OF EVOLUTIONARY GROWTH AND PERFECTABILITY, IMBUED WITH "AN IDEAL OF HEROIC LEADERSHIP." THIS DEDICATION TO GROWTH HAS BEEN A PROBLEM DURING THE RECENT PERIOD OF DECLINE IN ENROLLMENTS. THE DARK SIDE OF THE OPTIMISTIC OUTLOOK, OF COURSE, IS A TENDENCY NOT TO NOTICE THINGS THEY CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT.

MARCH, AFTER CONCLUDING THAT THE MOVEMENT OF SUPERINTENDENTS REFLECTED IN THE WISCONSIN DATA WAS ALMOST RANDOM,[6] NOTED SOME

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[5] IBID., PP. 264-65.

[6] MARCH, "ALMOST RANDOM CAREERS," PP. 398-403.

NONRANDOM, BUT MINOR, CHARACTERISTICS THAT PROBABLY RELATE MORE TO THE ROLE THAN TO THE INDIVIDUAL. ONE WAS THE TENDENCY TO START IN THE HINTERLANDS AND TO MOVE TOWARD THE METROPOLIS. ANOTHER WAS THE TENDENCY OF EARLY STARTERS TO MOVE MORE OFTEN, LATER STARTERS ENJOYING LONGER TENURE. A THIRD WAS AN INDICATION THAT THE MORE EDUCATION A SUPERINTENDENT HAD, THE OFTENER HE OR SHE MOVED UP TO NEW AND MORE PRESTIGIOUS SUPERINTENDENCIES. ALSO, MARCH DREW ATTENTION TO THE AGE OF FIFTY-EIGHT AS A WATERSHED, WITH MOVES TO NEW SUPERINTENDENCIES DECLINING SHARPLY THEREAFTER AND RATES OF LEAVING SUPERINTENDENCIES RISING SHARPLY.

AFTER WORLD WAR II, TWO INTERVENTIONS IN TRADITIONAL PATTERNS OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ADMINISTRATORS BROUGHT SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE SUPPLY OF PEOPLE QUALIFIED TO ADMINISTER SCHOOLS AND IN THE QUALITY OF TRAINING RECEIVED BY THE CANDIDATES. THE FIRST WAS GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED, AND INCIDENTAL TO THE SERVICEMAN'S READJUSTMENT ACT OF 1944, THE "G. I. BILL." IT BROUGHT A VAST INFUSION OF MATURE, CAPABLE GRADUATE STUDENTS INTO ADMINISTRATOR-TRAINING PROGRAMS AND GREATLY INCREASED BOTH THE NUMBER OF CANDIDATES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE JOBS AND THE QUALITY OF THEIR CREDENTIALS. THE SECOND INTERVENTION WAS FOUNDATION-SUPPORTED. THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, DISCUSSED BY NORMAN BOYAN IN THIS SECTION'S INVITED LECTURE LAST YEAR, WAS SUPPORTED THROUGHOUT THE 1950S BY THE KELLOGG FOUNDATION AND WAS AIMED AT IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO PREPARE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS.

THE ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION HAD SHARPLY RESTRICTED THE FLOW OF YOUNG PEOPLE INTO COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS SET UP TO MEET STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION. THIS CREATED A SHORTAGE THAT WAS GREATLY EXACERBATED, AS NOTED EARLIER, BY THE MANPOWER DEMANDS OF THE MILITARY AS THE BUILDUP FOR WORLD WAR II BEGAN IN 1939 AND CONTINUED THROUGH 1944. THIS SHORTAGE PERSISTED THROUGHOUT THE 1940s, AND IN SPITE OF A GREATLY INCREASED SUPPLY OF ACCREDITED ADMINISTRATORS IN THE FIFTIES, THROUGHOUT MOST OF THAT DECADE AS WELL, BECAUSE OF THE RAPID EXPANSION OF SCHOOLS MADE NECESSARY BY THE CONTINUING POSTWAR RISE IN THE SCHOOL-AGE POPULATION, AND BECAUSE OF THE DIFFERENTIATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES FOR SPECIAL FUNCTIONS.

STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE ACCREDITATION HAD ALSO INCREASED SINCE 1939. BY 1955 THE NUMBER OF STATES REQUIRING GRADUATE WORK HAD MORE THAN DOUBLED, TO FORTY-ONE; TWENTY-SIX STATES REQUIRED THE MASTER'S DEGREE AND TWO REQUIRED STUDY BEYOND THE MASTER'S. MOST OF US THEN WORKING IN THE COOPERATIVE PROGRAM IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, AND INDEED THE LEADERS OF THE ADMINISTRATORS' ASSOCIATIONS, SHARED THE NOTION THAT THESE REQUIREMENTS WOULD CONTINUE TO RISE, AND PERHAPS IN DUE COURSE WOULD INCLUDE THE DOCTORATE AS A REQUIREMENT. THAT DID NOT HAPPEN, HOWEVER. THE MASTER'S DEGREE IS STILL THE ENTRY DEGREE IN SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION. IN THE WISCONSIN DATA WE FOUND 7 PERCENT OF THE ADMINISTRATORS WITH DOCTORATES IN 1939; THIS GROUP HAD RISEN ONLY TO 13 PERCENT BY 1974.

IN THE 1960s THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS DID RAISE THEIR REQUIREMENT FOR MEMBERSHIP, TO THE MASTER'S DEGREE PLUS THIRTY-TWO CREDITS, BUT WITH UNHAPPY RESULTS. THE ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP DROPPED OFF TO LITTLE MORE THAN EIGHT THOUSAND, ABOUT HALF ITS PREVIOUS STRENGTH. IN 1974, BY MAILED BALLOTS, THE ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP VOTED TO DROP THE REQUIREMENT. I REPEAT AGAIN WHAT MANY PEOPLE FIND SURPRISING: THE MASTER'S DEGREE IS STILL THE ENTRY DEGREE FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, AND ONLY A MINORITY OF PRACTICING SUPERINTENDENTS TODAY HOLD THE DOCTORATE.

WITH THE STIMULATION OF ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING BY THE G. I. BILL IN THE 1950s AND BY THE UPGRADING OF SO MANY TEACHERS' COLLEGES TO UNIVERSITY STATUS DURING THE SAME YEARS, "SUPPLY-SIDE ECONOMICS" EVENTUALLY ACHIEVED THE INEVITABLE. BY THE MID-1960s THE INCREASING NUMBERS OF ACCREDITED ADMINISTRATORS HAD BECOME A GLUT.

THE PLENTIFUL SUPPLY, WHICH IN CLASSIC ECONOMIC TERMS REDUCED THE PRICE OF ADMINISTRATORS, MADE POSSIBLE AN INCREASED SPECIALIZATION OF STAFF FUNCTIONS AT RELATIVELY LOW COST TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS, FOR THOSE SEEKING TO GET IN LINE FOR PROMOTION WERE QUITE WILLING TO SETTLE FOR SMALL INCREASES IN SALARIES IF TITLES WENT WITH THEM. THE ADMINISTRATIVE HIERARCHY LENGTHENED AS ONE, TWO, AND SOMETIMES EVEN THREE ASSISTANTS WERE ATTACHED TO EACH PRINCIPALSHIP. EVEN THE ROLE OF GUIDANCE COUNSELOR BEGAN TO EMERGE AS AN ENTRY POINT FOR THOSE SEEKING TO GET IN THE LINE

HEADED FOR THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPALSHIP. PRINCIPALS IN TURN FOUND A NEW LEVEL OF SPECIALIZATION BETWEEN THEM AND THE CENTRAL OFFICE IN SOMETHING CALLED COORDINATOR. I RECALL GETTING A CALL AT STANFORD FROM AN OLD FRIEND WHO HAD MOVED FROM A LARGE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THE MIDDLE WEST TO A SUPERINTENDENCY OF A CALIFORNIA UNIFIED DISTRICT, WANTING TO KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH THIRTY-THREE COORDINATORS HE HAD INHERITED. I TOLD HIM I HADN'T THE FAINTEST IDEA BUT COMFORTED HIM WITH THE THOUGHT THAT I WAS SURE THEY ALL WERE HOPING EVENTUALLY TO GET HIS JOB!

AT THE CENTRAL-OFFICE LEVEL, TOO, SPECIALIZATIONS OF STAFF FUNCTIONS RESULTED IN A LARGE INCREASE IN DEPUTY, ASSOCIATE, AND ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENTS, PLUS VARIOUS AIDES. AGAIN, BECAUSE OF THE SURPLUS, THESE SPECIALIZATIONS, TOO, WERE ACHIEVED AT RELATIVELY LOW COST.

THE SUPERINTENDENT PAID A PRICE FOR THIS PROLIFERATION, FOR WITH SO MANY PEOPLE QUALIFIED--MANY OF WHOM HAD ALSO GAINED VISIBILITY AND EXPERIENCE IN THE BOARDROOM--THE HISTORIC SPREAD BETWEEN THE CLASSROOM TEACHER'S AND THE SUPERINTENDENT'S SALARIES NARROWED, UNTIL TOWARD THE END OF THE 1970s ONE COULD WONDER WHY ANYONE SOUGHT SUCH A TROUBLED SEAT FOR THE REWARDS THAT WERE OFFERED. ANY BOARD THAT WANTED TO COULD FIND PLENTY OF PEOPLE FULLY QUALIFIED BY THE STATE AND BY UNIVERSITY DEGREES TO RUN THEIR SCHOOLS, AT SALARIES IN SOME INSTANCES LESS THAN TWICE THOSE OF THE HIGHER PAID CLASSROOM TEACHERS.

IN ECONOMIC TERMS, AN INDIVIDUAL'S INVESTMENT IN THE EDUCATION REQUIRED TO OBTAIN AN ADMINISTRATOR'S CREDENTIALS, INCLUDING EARNINGS FORGONE DURING THE PERIOD OF TRAINING, PAID A VERY HIGH RATE OF RETURN IN THE 1930s, FORTIES, AND EARLY FIFTIES; THE RETURNS TO SUCH INVESTMENT DECLINED IN THE LATE FIFTIES AND THROUGHOUT THE SIXTIES, AND MAY HAVE TURNED NEGATIVE IN THE SEVENTIES.[7] THE GRADUATES OF PRESTIGIOUS TRAINING PROGRAMS STILL RANKED HIGH IN THE COMPETITION FOR THE MOST ATTRACTIVE SUPERINTENDENCIES; BUT THE IMPACT OF THE GRADUATES OF NEWER PROGRAMS WAS FELT IN THEIR MOVEMENT INTO ENTRY POSITIONS, THE NUMEROUS SMALL SUPERINTENDENCIES WHICH WERE ONCE THE PRIVATE HUNTING PRESERVES OF GRADUATES OF THE GREAT RESEARCH-BASED UNIVERSITIES.

AS THE RATE OF RETURN TO INVESTMENT DECLINED, A FURTHER SUBSTITUTION EFFECT APPEARED. NOT ONLY DID ASPIRING ADMINISTRATORS TURN TO THE CHEAPER STATE COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS TO REDUCE THE COST OF THEIR CREDENTIALS, THEY ALSO FLOCKED TO NEW PROGRAMS EMERGING IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR: THESE OFFERED COURSES LEADING TO A DEGREE THROUGH VARIOUS EXTENSION ARRANGEMENTS SO THAT THE CANDIDATE NEED NOT FORGO INCOME WHILE COMPLETING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCREDITATION. NEEDLESS TO SAY, A KIND OF GRESHAM'S LAW BEGAN TO OPERATE, WITH THE GRADUATES OF PROGRAMS REQUIRING THE LEAST INVESTMENT COMING INCREASINGLY INTO CIRCULATION, AND

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[7] A STUDY OF THE MIDWEST ADMINISTRATION CENTER'S ALUMNI AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO DETAILS THIS PATTERN AND SUGGESTED THAT THE RETURNING TO SUCH INVESTMENTS MAY HAVE TURNED NEGATIVE BY THE EARLY 1970s. J. ALAN THOMAS, "_____" (UNPUBLISHED PAPER), MAY 1975.

THOSE OF PROGRAMS REQUIRING THE LARGEST OUTLAYS DECLINING. AS A CONSEQUENCE, BY THE END OF THE 1970S MOST OF THE PRIVATE RESEARCH-BASED UNIVERSITIES WERE VIRTUALLY OUT OF THE BUSINESS OF PREPARING SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS.

FURTHERMORE, THE NOTION WE HAD IN THE MID-FIFITES WHICH WAS WELL EXPRESSED BY HALPIN AS A "NEW MOVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION: THE USE OF THEORY IN ADMINISTRATION, THE STRESS UPON THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES TO ADMINISTRATION, AND A PLEA FOR THEORETICALLY-ORIENTED EMPIRICAL RESEARCH"[8] WAS NOT FULFILLED, OR AT LEAST IT DID NOT FULFILL THE HOPES MANY OF US HAD FOR IT AT THE TIME. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT NOTHING WAS ACHIEVED--QUITE THE CONTRARY. GETZELS HAS OFFERED TWO STRIKING EXAMPLES OF THE IMPACT OF RESEARCH ON THE CURRICULAR MATERIALS USED IN THE PREPARATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AT TWO POINTS IN TIME. HIS FIRST IS BASED ON CHANGE IN TEXTBOOK ORIENTATION: "THE FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION OF PERHAPS THE MOST WIDELY USED TEXT IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION SAYS, 'WE FEEL THAT SERIOUS EXAMINATION OF AND THOUGHT ABOUT ONE'S OWN EXPERIENCES AND THOSE OF OTHER PEOPLE DEALING WITH SIMILAR PROBLEMS IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE TO ANYONE WHO WISHES TO GAIN A REAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS' (CAMPBELL, CORBALLY, & RAMSEYER, INTRODUCTION OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, BOSTON: ALLYN & BACON, 1958, P. VI). THE FOREWORD TO THE FOURTH EDITION OF THE SAME TEXT A DOZEN YEARS

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[8] ANDREW A. HALPIN, "A FOGGY VIEW FROM OLYMPUS," THE JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, VII (MAY 1969), P. 10.

LATER ALTERED THIS TO: 'THE BOOK IS BUILT ON THE CONVICTION THAT ONE DEVELOPS AN UNDERSTANDING OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AS ONE EXAMINES CONCEPTS AND RELATES THEM TO ACTUAL EXPERIENCES' (CAMPBELL, BRIDGES, CORBALLY, NYSTRAND, & RAMSEYER, 1971, P. XIV)."[9] THE SECOND EXAMPLE IS DRAWN FROM CHANGES DEDUCIBLE FROM DIFFERENT ISSUES OF THE SAME ANNUAL PUBLICATIONS: ". . . THE ALTERATION IN THE CONTENT AND AUTHORSHIP OF TWO SUCCESSIVE AND WIDELY USED YEARBOOKS ON EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION BY THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATION, ONE IN 1946 (HENRY, 1946), THE OTHER IN 1964 (GRIFFITHS, 1964). OF THE NINE PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FIRST VOLUME, FIVE WERE PRACTICING STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS OR SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS; OF THE 15 PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SECOND VOLUME, NOT ONE WAS. THEY WERE INSTEAD MAINLY FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE, ORGANIZATIONAL, AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES."[10]

YET IN SPITE OF THIS EVIDENCE, AND A GREAT DEAL MORE MARSHALED BY BOYAN IN HIS EXPANSION OF HIS LECTURE LAST YEAR,[11] AND MUCH MORE THAT COULD BE CITED TO SUPPORT THE NOTION THAT PREPARATION PROGRAMS WERE INDEED IMPROVED, I REPEAT THAT THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR WAS SIMPLY NOT REALIZED. OUT OF THE CADRES OF STUDENTS OF HIGH INTELLECTUAL CALIBER ATTRACTED,

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[9] JACOB W. GETZELS, "PARADIGM AND PRACTICE: ON THE IMPACT OF BASIC RESEARCH IN EDUCATION," IN IMPACT OF RESEARCH ON EDUCATION, ED. PATRICK SUPPES (WASHINGTON, D.C.: NATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION, 1978), P. 498.

[10] IBID.

[11] NORMAN J. BOYAN, "FOLLOW THE LEADER: COMMENTARY ON RESEARCH IN EDUCATION," EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER, X (FEBRUARY 1931), PP. 6-13,

IN PART BY WHAT FOR THOSE TIMES WERE GENEROUS FELLOWSHIPS, INTO THE THEORY- AND RESEARCH-ORIENTED PROGRAMS OF THE MAJOR RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES LINKED TO THE CPEA, ONLY A FEW WENT BACK TO THE FIELD OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION. THE GREAT MAJORITY WENT INTO PROFESSORSHIPS, DEANSHIPS, COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PRESIDENCIES, A FEW INTO FOUNDATIONS, AND SOME ELSEWHERE. MUCH OF THE RESEARCH THAT CONTINUED INTO THE SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES WAS ATTENUATED BY DISCIPLINARY FRAGMENTATION AND SPECIALIZED METHODOLOGIES, AND MUCH OF THE ENERGY POTENTIALLY AVAILABLE FOR RESEARCH WAS DRAWN OFF AND DIFFUSED BY FOUNDATION AND FEDERAL FUNDING TO ENCOURAGE INNOVATION AND CHANGE IN SCHOOLS.

ONE CAN ARGUE THAT HAD THE HIGHEST HOPES OF THE CPEA BEEN REALIZED, WE MIGHT IN THE PAST QUARTER OF A CENTURY HAVE COME TO SOME SIMPLIFYING HYPOTHESES ABOUT SCHOOLING, IN THE WAY THAT MEDICINE CAME TO VIEW MOST OF US AS REASONABLY HEALTHY MOST OF THE TIME, AND SO COULD CONCENTRATE ITS EFFORTS ON DEVELOPING TECHNOLOGY FOR IDENTIFYING AND TREATING OUR MALADIES. WE HEARD MUCH DURING THE SIXTIES, AS FEDERAL FUNDING BEGAN TO FLOW, ABOUT EMULATING THE AGRICULTURAL MODEL, WITH EXPERIMENT STATIONS AND DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS, AND FEDERAL MONEY SUPPORTED MANY OF THESE. WHAT THIS RHETORIC IGNORED WAS THE FACT THAT THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION BEGAN TO GATHER MOMENTUM ONLY OUT OF PAINSTAKING ATTENTION TO GENES AND NUTRIENTS, AN ENORMOUS EXPANSION OF TECHNOLOGY, AND AN ATTENDANT REDUCTION IN THE NEED FOR PERSONAL SERVICES, ALL

OF WHICH GET US IN TROUBLE EVERY TIME WE RAISE ANY ONE OF THESE ISSUES IN CONNECTION WITH SCHOOLING.

SO OUR AIMS REMAIN DIFFUSED, HAVE IN FACT BECOME MORE DIFFUSE. WE HAVE FOUND NO SIMPLIFYING HYPOTHESES. OUR TECHNOLOGY FOR SCHOOLING REMAINS MEAGER, AND WHAT WE HAVE TENDS TO GET MISAPPLIED, AS WE USE OUR TESTS OF ABILITY, WHICH WERE DEVELOPED FOR SELECTION, FOR CLASSIFICATION WITHIN SCHOOLS, OR AS WE USE OUR TESTS DEVELOPED FOR JUDGING APTITUDE FOR SCHOOLING AS A MEASURE OF THE QUALITY OF SCHOOLING ITSELF.

WHEREAS THE PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SUPERINTENDENTS TODAY ARE MUCH THE SAME AS EVER, THE PUBLIC EXPECTS LESS OF THEM AS AUTHORITATIVE PROFESSIONAL MENTORS, AND MUCH MORE OF THEM AS SKILLED POLITICAL NEGOTIATORS. THE SOCIAL SETTING IN WHICH SCHOOLS ARE ADMINISTERED HAS UNDERGONE STRIKING CHANGES DURING THE PAST FORTY YEARS. I WILL MENTION FOUR, ALL OF WHICH HAVE HAD GREAT IMPACT ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS.

THE FIRST IS THE EXTRAORDINARY INCREASE IN THE MOBILITY OF FAMILIES THAT BEGAN JUST AFTER WORLD WAR II: THIS HAS SO BROKEN UP LOCAL AND REGIONAL ENCLAVES OF HOMOGENEOUS SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS VALUES THAT SUPERINTENDENTS WHO RELY ON THEIR COMFORTABLE AND SETTLED BELIEFS IN WHAT IS RIGHT, WHEN MOVING TO NEW POSITIONS, DO SO AT THEIR OWN PERIL.

THE SECOND CHANGE RELATED TO THE DESEGREGATION OF SCHOOLING DATING FROM THE <u>BROWN VS. BOARD OF EDUCATION</u> DECISION IN 1954

AND ITS LONG AFTERMATH OF RACIAL STRIFE EXACERBATED BY BUSING, OCCASIONAL JUDICIAL INTERVENTION IN THE OPERATION OF SCHOOLS, AND THE "CARROT AND STICK" APPROACH OF FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDING. ALTHOUGH SOME SUPERINTENDENTS HAVE ARGUED THAT THESE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE MADE IT NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO RUN SCHOOLS, I HAVE HEARD NONE ARGUE SERIOUSLY THAT THIS GREAT SOCIAL CHANGE COULD OR SHOULD BE UNDONE. IN MANY LOCAL COMMUNITIES BELIEFS AND VALUES REFLECTED IN ARRANGEMENTS FOR SCHOOLING WERE IN CONFLICT WITH THE NATIONAL VALUES OF RACIAL EQUALITY AND EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY; SO DEEPLY INGRAINED WERE THEY THAT INTEGRATED SCHOOLING WOULD MOST LIKELY NEVER HAVE COME TO PASS IN MANY PLACES HAD THE NATIONAL CONSENSUS NOT BEEN ENFORCED BY COURT ORDERS, BY DIFFERENTIAL FUNDING IN CATEGORICAL AID PROGRAMS, AND ON OCCASION BY FEDERAL MARSHALLS AND BATTLE-READY TROOPS.

THE THIRD CHANGE IS THE RESURFACING, AFTER MANY DECADES OF QUIESCENSE, OF WHAT IS PERCEIVED BY SOME AS A BASIC CONFLICT BETWEEN RELIGION AND SCIENCE. EVEN NOW, FIVE HUNDRED YEARS AFTER THE COPERNICAN REVOLUTION--IN THIS NATION WHOSE FOUNDING DOCUMENTS ARE IMBUED WITH THE ENLIGHTENMENT AND THE RULE OF REASON, AND WHICH IS NOW DEEPLY COMMITTED TO TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT--THE CAPABILITY OF OUR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO PREPARE CHILDREN IN THE SCIENCES, ESPECIALLY THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES, IS STILL HINDERED BY FUNDAMENTALIST ANIMOSITIES SO DEEP AND SO SERIOUS THAT THEY MAY CONTINUE TO POSE A THREAT TO THE GENERAL WELFARE THROUGH THE 1980s AND PERHAPS BEYOND.

THE FOURTH SERIOUS CHANGE, AND ONE ON WHICH I WISH TO COMMENT AT GREATER LENGTH, IS THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNION MOVEMENT AMONG TEACHERS DURING THE SIXTIES, SEVENTIES, AND EIGHTIES. UNIONIZATION, THOUGH IT BULKS LARGE NOW IN THE THINKING OF SUPERINTENDENTS, WILL NOT IN THE LONG RUN BE LIKELY TO RANK WITH SUCH WEIGHTY MATTERS AS RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS CLEAVAGES, WHICH ARE VERY OLD AND VERY DEEP IN OUR SOCIETY, AND INDEED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. SINCE THE 1830S OUR SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN MODELED ON THE PRUSSIAN PROTOTYPE AND UNTIL RECENTLY HAVE REMAINED QUITE AUTHORITARIAN INSTITUTIONS. THE TEACHERS' UNION MOVEMENT CAN BE VIEWED AS A STRUGGLE BY PROFESSIONALS TO ACHIEVE THE RIGHT, RATHER GENERALLY ACCEPTED IN WESTERN SOCIETY, TO BE GOVERNED BY WRITTEN RULES DEVELOPED WITH THEIR ADVICE AND CONSENT, NOT BY THE CAPRICE OF THOSE IN POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY. THE REVOLUTION NOW IN PROGRESS MAY BE NEEDED AS BADLY AS WAS THE ELIMINATION OF PARTISAN POLITICS FROM TEACHER RECRUITMENT SOON AFTER THE TURN OF THIS CENTURY. THE SUBSTITUTION OF WRITTEN LAW AND DUE PROCESS FOR THE WHIMS OF THOSE IN CONTROL HAS ALWAYS BEEN VIEWED AS PROGRESS AFTER ITS ACCOMPLISHMENT. IN THIS INSTANCE IT MAY HAVE, IN ADDITION TO OTHER SALUTORY EFFECTS ON THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, THE ADVANTAGE OF REDUCING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION FOR THE AUTHORITARIAN PERSONALITY. THE LEGITIMATE FUNCTIONS OF THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR SHOULD BE EASIER TO PERFORM AFTER THE NEW AGREEMENTS ARE FULLY ESTABLISHED AND ACCEPTED, AND INDEED MANY ABLE AND QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATORS WELCOME THE CHANGES THAT ARE TAKING PLACE.

AS TEACHERS ORGANIZE FOR MORE EFFECTIVE INFLUENCE ON DECISIONS THAN WAS TRADITIONALLY OFFERED BY THE OCCASIONAL SYMPATHETIC AND DEMOCRATICALLY MINDED ADMINISTRATOR, THEIR RANGE OF INTERESTS HAVE BROADENED. IN ADDITION TO OBTAINING DETAILED AGREEMENTS ON CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AND DUE PROCESS IN THEIR ENFORCEMENT, THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO INCREASE THEIR INFLUENCE ON SCHOOL POLICIES ACROSS A BROAD SPECTRUM OF OPERATIONS, INCLUDING CURRICULUM, IN-SERVICE TRAINING, APPOINTMENTS, AND TEACHER-TRAINING PROGRAMS. THE SURPRISING DEVELOPMENT IN THIS DECADE IS THE INABILITY OF THE UNIONS TO KEEP SALARIES ABREAST OF INFLATION. THIS FAILURE SEEMS TO BE DUE IN PART TO OVERPRODUCTION OF TEACHERS IN A PERIOD OF DECLINING ENROLLMENTS, WITH ITS PREDICTABLE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES, AND IN PART TO THE WILLINGNESS OF UNION LEADERSHIP TO TRADE OFF SALARY INCREASES FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE WORK FORCE, WITH THE INTENTION OF RETAINING POLITICAL CLOUT.

IN THE VERY LARGE SCHOOL DISTRICTS A SUBSTANTIAL SEGMENT OF SCHOOL SERVICE PERSONNEL HAVE REMAINED OUTSIDE THE CONTROL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION. AT THE LOWER END OF THE STATUS HIERARCHY, THESE PERSONS SWEEP THE FLOORS, PAINT THE WALLS, AND FIRE THE FURNACES; AT UPPER LEVELS, THEY NEGOTIATE THE CONTRACTS FOR BUILDING SCHOOLS, FOR BUYING, SELLING, AND LEASING LAND, AND FOR ACQUIRING EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES USED BY THE SCHOOLS. THEY ALSO NEGOTIATE TAX RATES AT THE LEVELS THAT WILL BE TOLERATED BY THE MUNICIPAL POLITICAL SYSTEM, AND OFTEN TOO THEY ENGAGE IN NEGOTIATIONS FOR FUNDS TO BE ALLOCATED TO THE SCHOOL BY THE LEGISLATURE AND CONGRESS.

THE SUPERINTENDENT RARELY GAINS CONTROL OF THIS SUBSYSTEM. MORE OFTEN, CONTROL LIES IN THE HANDS OF THE ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT FOR BUSINESS, THE SECRETARY OF THE BOARD, OR THE SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER, FEW OF WHOM HAVE IN THE PAST BEEN PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS. A NEW TYPE OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGER IS EMERGING IN SOME SYSTEMS, AND A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGERS HAS BEEN ACTIVE FOR MORE THAN TWO DECADES IN PROMOTING PROFESSIONALIZATION. BUT WHERE THESE SUBSYSTEMS ARE POWERFUL FACTORS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL AFFAIRS THEY USUALLY HAVE CLOSE TIES TO THE MUNICIPAL POLITICAL SYSTEMS. AND IN VIEW OF THE HISTORIC DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN GAINING THEIR AUTONOMY, I AM SKEPTICAL THAT FULL-FLEDGED PROFESSIONAL STATUS FOR THE BUSINESS MANAGER IS IMMINENT, OR LIKELY TO BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT MORE ATTENTION FROM STATE LEGISLATURES THAN WE HAVE OBSERVED IN MOST STATES. THE ISSUE I SEE HERE IS WHETHER IT IS (1) POSSIBLE OR (2) DESIRABLE IN VERY LARGE DISTRICTS TO DISLODGE THE MANAGEMENT OF THE STRICTLY BUSINESS ASPECTS OF SCHOOL AFFAIRS FROM ITS USUALLY EXTENSIVE INVOLVEMENT WITH THE MUNICIPAL POLITICAL SYSTEM. THREE POSSIBILITIES ARE (1) TO MAKE IT AN ENTIRELY AUTONOMOUS UNIT WITHIN THE SCHOOL BUREAUCRACY AND REGULATE IT SO THOROUGHLY AS TO ASSURE ITS INDEPENDENCE FROM BOTH PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS AND MUNICIPAL POLITICS (THIS SEEMS TO BE THE ROUTE CHOSEN TO EXTRICATE CHICAGO FROM ITS RECENT FINANCIAL TROUBLES); (2) TO SHIFT IT ENTIRELY TO THE MUNICIPAL BUREAUCRACY, AS SOME CITIES AND MANY COUNTIES HAVE DONE IN LAW OR IN FACT; OR

(3) TO GIVE IT ENTIRELY TO THE STATE BUREAUCRACY, WHICH A FEW STATES ALREADY HAVE DONE IN PART OR IN WHOLE, AND WHICH MANY OTHERS COULD DO WITH LITTLE LOSS IN AUTONOMY FOR LOCAL UNITS AND PROBABLY WITH GREAT GAINS IN EFFICIENCY.

ONE COULD HARDLY LEAVE THE SUBJECT OF CHANGE IN THE SETTINGS IN WHICH SUPERINTENDENTS WORK WITHOUT COMMENTING ON THE CHANGES IN THE GOVERNING BOARDS WITH WHICH SUPERINTENDENTS WORK. THE MAJOR CHANGE IS A REMARKABLE DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF SCHOOL BOARDS. INARTICULATE MINORITIES HAVE FOUND VOICES AND ARTICULATED DEMANDS IN BOARDROOMS, AND THEIR LEADERS HAVE BECOME BOARD MEMBERS WHO INSIST ON HIRING SUPERINTENDENTS WHO WILL SATISFY THEIR DEMANDS. THIS, IN A DEMOCRACY, MUST BE VIEWED AS PROGRESS.

THE CLASSIC VIEW OF THE LOCAL BOARD OF EDUCATION IN THE LITERATURE OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION HAS EMPHASIZED ITS ROLE AS POLICY MAKER. THE LEGISLATURE SPECIFIES THE FORM OF THE BOARD, ITS POWERS, AND ITS DUTIES. IT IS A POLITICAL BODY BOTH IN THE SENSE THAT IT MAKES POLICY FOR THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM AND IN THE SENSE THAT IT IS REQUIRED TO ENFORCE POLICY MADE BY THE LEGISLATURE. STATE LEGISLATURES RECENTLY HAVE BEEN INCREASING THEIR BODY OF POLICY FOR SCHOOLS (OFTEN AT THE URGING OF CONGRESS OR THE FEDERAL COURTS) AND THEREBY DECREASING THE ROLE OF THE BOARD IN POLICY MAKING. WE MAY EXPECT TO SEE BOARDS OF EDUCATION MORE AND MORE ENGAGED IN MEDIATING THE TERMS UNDER WHICH UNIVERSALISTIC POLICY IS APPLIED IN THE LOCAL SYSTEM, AND LESS AND LESS INVOLVED WITH THE ACTUAL FORMULATION OF POLICY.

I BELIEVE THERE ARE GOOD AND SUFFICIENT REASONS WHY THE VOLUME OF POLICY MADE BY BOARDS OF EDUCATION IS DECLINING AND THAT MADE BY LEGISLATURES IS INCREASING. WHETHER BOARD MEMBERS ARE DIRECTLY ELECTED OR APPOINTED BY OFFICIALS WHO ARE POLITICALLY RESPONSIBLE TO THE ELECTORATE, THEY RESPOND TO A TRADITION OF BEING NONPOLITICAL IN THE PARTISAN SENSE. THUS, PERSONS ELECTED TO BOARDS OF EDUCATION HAVE RARELY OCCUPIED POLITICAL OFFICE, AND UPON THE EXPIRATION OF THEIR TERMS THEY SELDOM RUN FOR OFFICE. THE ROLE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER IS ONE OF THE LAST REMAINING OPPORTUNITIES IN THE POLITICAL WORLD FOR THE "LADY" OR THE "GENTLEMAN" IN PUBLIC OFFICE. IN MANY OF THE VERY LARGE SCHOOL SYSTEMS PERIODS OF RELATIVE PEACE AND QUIET IN THE MANGEMENT OF THE DISTRICT'S AFFAIRS HAVE IN THE PAST BEEN CHARACTERIZED BY HIGH INCIDENCE OF "GENTLEFOLK." FORTUNATELY OR UNFORTUNATELY, SUCH PEOPLE HAVE A MARKED DISTASTE FOR CONTROVERSY AND TEND TO RETIRE IN TIMES OF PUBLIC UPROAR. BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL MEN AND WOMEN FIND TROUBLED TIMES IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS A THREAT TO THEIR INCOME, AND LEAVE THE BOARD MEMBERSHIPS IN OTHER, OFTEN INEXPERT AND INDECISIVE, HANDS. THEREFORE, SOME OF THE MOST CONSEQUENTIAL EDUCATIONAL ISSUES OF OUR TIME, BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN THE MOST VIOLENTLY CONTROVERSIAL, HAVE TOO OFTEN BEEN SIDESTEPPED BY BOARDS OF EDUCATION, AND SO HAVE HAD TO BE RESOLVED IN THE LESS SQUEAMISH BUT MORE REALISTIC ARENAS OF PARTISAN POLITICS, OR IN THE COLD LIGHT OF REASONED JUDGMENT BY THE COURTS.

FURTHERMORE, APPOINTED BOARDS OF EDUCATION ARE OFTEN UNABLE TO RESOLVE IMPORTANT ISSUES BECAUSE THE BOARDS ARE DELIBERATELY STRUCTURED TO PREVENT THEIR FINAL RESOLUTION. THE CLASSIC ILLUSTRATION IS THE BIG-CITY BOARD WITH ITS FIXED BALANCE OF RELIGIOUS FAITHS, OF LABOR AND MANAGEMENT, AND OF ETHNIC GROUPS.

THERE IS MUCH DISCUSSION IN THE LITERATURE ABOUT THE PROCESSES BY WHICH BOARDS OF EDUCATION ARE SELECTED. OUT OF OUR STUDIES OF SCHOOL BOARDS AT STANFORD IN THE MID-SIXTIES CAME THIS GENERALIZATION: THE FORM OF THESE ARRANGEMENTS IS OF LESS CONSEQUENCE THAN THE NEED THAT THE BOARD'S FUNCTIONS BE A MATTER OF CONTINUING PUBLIC CONCERN. NO FORM OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT PERMISSIBLE UNDER OUR SOCIAL CONTRACTS IS LIKELY TO SERVE AN APATHETIC PEOPLE WELL OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME. ON THE OTHER HAND, ANY OF THE MYRIAD FORMS FOR MANAGING SCHOOLS CAN FUNCTION REASONABLY WELL SO LONG AS SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF INTERESTED AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS ARE WILLING TO INFORM THEMSELVES AND ENGAGE IN THE TASK OF MAKING THEM WORK.

I WOULD LIKE TO CLOSE THIS PERSPECTIVE ON THE PAST FORTY YEARS WITH A VALEDICTION APPROPRIATE TO ONE IN MY PRESENT LINE OF BUSINESS, AND APPROPRIATE, TOO, FOR THIS AUDIENCE, WHICH ATTESTS BY ITS PRESENCE AN INTEREST IN RESEARCH ON EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION. I WON'T OBJECT TO YOUR CALLING IT A COMMERCIAL IF YOU WISH. SINCE THE SPENCER FOUNDATION BEGAN OPERATIONS MORE THAN A DECADE AGO, WE HAVE MAINTAINED AN ABIDING INTEREST IN RESEARCH ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

OF THE MORE THAN 35 MILLION DOLLARS WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ALLOCATE TO THE SUPPORT OF ALL RESEARCH OVER THE DECADE, WE HAVE GIVEN SOME 6.7 MILLION DOLLARS, IN 104 INDIVIDUAL GRANTS, TO SUPPORT RESEARCH IN THE CATEGORY WE CALL "ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF SCHOOLS." WE WOULD HAVE BEEN DELIGHTED--AND COULD HAVE AFFORDED--TO INVEST MORE IN THIS AREA IF ONLY WE HAD RECEIVED MORE HIGH-QUALITY PROPOSALS. I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT WE EXPECT TO CONTINUE LOOKING FOR SUCH OPPORTUNITIES IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE AND WE WILL HOPE TO HEAR FROM MANY OF YOU. THANK YOU.

H.T.J.
4/12/81